



Access to Higher Education

External Moderator Appointments Guide

2009/10



1. The moderation model

External Access Moderators are usually appointed against one or more Access Diploma titles. These Access Diplomas can be moderated by a single moderator who has sufficient curriculum expertise to carry out his/her role effectively. The AVA will try to cluster together similar and academically related Diploma titles offered at a centre into a single 'Access Moderation Schedule'. Payment for moderators is based upon the overall number of learners registered at the centre on that cluster of titles with an additional fee for each additional Diploma title moderated.

Where this is not the case, for example where the subject specialisms across different Access qualification awards are too diverse for a single moderator then the AVA will appoint additional external moderators to cover further Access Diplomas. The AVA Access Quality & Moderation Officer will liaise with the main contact at the provider centre to agree the best model.

For 2009-10 a pilot alternative moderation model, based upon a lead moderator and additional subject moderator, is being trialled with one centre. The outcomes of this will be fed into future plans for developing the external moderation procedures for Access within OCNSER.

2. Selection criteria for moderators

Before OCNSER appoints an external moderator to an Access Diploma it will ensure that the following criteria can be met by the individual:

- be familiar with the aims and philosophy of Access provision as appropriate
- have a good understanding of the particular area of work they are to moderate and be academically/vocationally competent at the appropriate level. Where a specific academic subject specialism is required the moderator must be able to demonstrate either appropriate qualifications (i.e. at Level 4) or relevant professional experience.
- understand the needs of Access learners on the programme being moderated
- be free of any financial, contractual or other obligations to the programme provider which may compromise their ability to act independently on behalf of OCNSER.

3. The appointment process

Potential Access moderators complete an application form (AQR8 available as a download). In order to ensure that external moderators meet the required criteria, applicants are asked to submit a brief CV as a part of this application. In addition OCNSER will request the contact details of up to two referees, one of which must be from the present or most recent employer.

Access Moderators are provisionally appointed by the Access Quality & Moderation Officer and this is subsequently confirmed by the AVA's Access to HE Quality and Development Committee¹.

¹ The Access Quality & Development Committee is composed of representatives from regional stakeholders with an active interest in Access to HE. Amongst other responsibilities, it oversees the appointment of all external moderators and monitors the outcomes of the moderation process.

New external moderators are required to go through an induction process. In addition opportunities for continuing development of external moderators are available, such as Moderator Forums, regular e-bulletins and updates etc.

Upon appointment the external moderator is sent an appointment letter, supporting documentation (Access Diploma recognition document, previous moderation reports etc) and an External Moderator Contract that relates to the moderation duties. The External Moderator Contract outlines the terms and conditions of the appointment. The external moderator must return a signed copy of the Moderation Contract to accept the appointment.

The AVA will also issue an 'Access Moderator Schedule' which will identify the precise Access Diploma Qualification titles covered by the contract. It will also have the contact details of the relevant Access Co-ordinator and a table of the fees.

4. Payment

Access Moderator fees will be paid as per the table below and this will reflect the total number of students enrolled on all of the Diploma titles covered by this Schedule, not per each separate Diploma title. The first Diploma title moderated is included in the fee related to the learner numbers and for each additional Diploma title thereafter an additional £15 will be paid. Only one final moderation report covering the Diploma titles on this schedule is required.

| Learners | Fee Payable | Learners | Fee Payable |
|---|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1 – 20 | £210.00 | 81 – 100 | £360.00 |
| 21 – 40 | £235.00 | 101 – 120 | £425.00 |
| 41 – 60 | £260.00 | 121 – 140 | £500.00 |
| 61 - 80 | £305.00 | 141+ | £585.00 |
| Fee per additional Diploma title | | £15 | |

Payment of travel expenses for moderator activity and attendance at training sessions will be 40p per mile or second-class public transport fare. The total fee is payable upon receipt of an Access moderation claim invoice (AQR4) which is available from the moderation webpage, after satisfactory completion of all services

All appointments are annually renewable for a period of four years, or until the programme ceases to run, whichever is sooner. External moderator contracts are therefore issued annually for the period of the appointment and normally run from 1 August (or at a point thereafter) to 31 July of each academic year.

5. OCNSER support for moderators

The AVA provides new moderators with a mandatory induction training procedure within the first 3 months of appointment. For 2009-10 a new online Access Moderator Induction package is being made available for all new and existing moderators. Moderator update training will be available after induction training has been completed and a moderator will be expected to participate in at least 1 update training event every 3 years.

- The Access Quality & Moderation Officer will provide regular briefings for Access moderators and specific updates as required.

- Access briefings for centres will be copied to all Access Moderators as a matter of course.
- Access Moderators will be invited to Sub-Regional Access Moderator Forums, virtual conversations using ICT and the annual Access to HE Regional Conference
- There is a dedicated Access moderation web page available at www.ocnser.org.uk/access-to-higher-education/access-moderation

For details of how to carry out Access moderation please see the OCN SER publication 'Access Quality & Moderation Handbook'

| OCN SER Access moderation contact information | | | |
|--|---------------|--|------------------------------|
| Role & Availability | Name | Email | Tel |
| Access Quality & Moderation Officer (Mondays – Thursdays) | Emma Sharp | e.sharp@ocnser.org.uk | 01227 827249 |
| Director of Access | David Gittins | d.gittins@ocnser.org.uk | 01227 824018 07943 864545 |